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The Commonweal

March 25, 1949

Our Lenten Liturgy

H. A. Reinhold

Men of Cold Passion

Jean C. de Menasce

VOLUME XLIX 15c NUMBER 24

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The
COMMONWEAL

VOLUME XLIX March 25, 1949 NUMBER 24

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Valley Staffs and Operations

SENATOR JAMES E. MURRAY of Montana, with many powerful co-sponsors, has again introduced into the Senate a Missouri Valley Authority Bill—a new and perfected bill. Politically wise analysts do not give it much chance to pass through Congress during this session, just as they expect action for a Columbia Valley Authority, and for the St. Lawrence development to be deferred once again. It is a shame, even if a very understandable one, to put off indefinitely the coordinated development of the great valley which the MVA plan and the rest envisage.

It is the intelligent utilization of the earth itself which is being put off. The valley ideas get their striking power from the co-ordinated, multi-purpose plans and operations which they embody. Citizens of the Missouri Valley area and of the whole country are increasingly aware of the good things it is scientifically, technically and economically possible to realize by an all-around exploitation of rain water, air and the crust of the earth. The recognition of waste widens and deepens so that it becomes a positive offense to see soil used simply to grow sage brush, and rain simply to take away the soil and flood out towns and productive acres downstream.

The Pick-Sloan "plan," operating in the Missouri Valley now, is inadequate and conflicting, and the recurrent floods down the river and into the Mississippi prove it flagrantly. Undoubtedly that region is not working with Nature now the way it should.

The political and administrative problem dominates the situation. Integrated land use on a scale as grand as the whole Missouri Valley is completely complex. The actual, physical utilization of the material resources can be approached somewhat objectively, with a cumulative scientific probability about what is better and what is worse. But the political-administrative problem is hedged by passion and prejudice and uncertainty. It is, probably, the great institutional problem of the age: private enterprise versus public, higher (or wider) governmental unit versus lower (or more local), and one branch of the same level government versus the other branches of the theoretically same government. The snarl is fantastic, so that wars and catastrophic depressions seem to be needed to cut through. But that condition is suicidally unreasonable.

Nothing published or said so far about the organization of the integrating staff for proper Missouri Valley development has yet convinced enough of the people strongly enough to force action. We are not experts, and we are not "sold" on any particular set-up; but action, we feel, is desirable. Most of the publicity of those who feel themselves progressive is for a readapted TVA-type organization. Commitment to that is probably made in most cases without full analysis of the actual working of TVA or of alternatives proposed by other government and private agencies. Nevertheless, we would far prefer to take a chance with a new Valley Authority, modeled after and building upon the experience of TVA, than to do nothing.

The very worst light that can be thrown on TVA shows it to be still a creative and hopeful enterprise, and, indisputably, great accomplishments have come to the Tennessee, by whatever agencies and forces, during the Authority's life. Prudence would also suggest the development and publication of a general, over-all, multi-purpose plan for the Missouri, even though no bill could be passed which would implement it with federal action. Goals can be debated and agreed upon regarding the utilization of resources—no matter what set-up is imagined to work toward the goals. Then, all the forces of the area, governmental and private, could better fit their activities into a loose, productive pattern. There would be a

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strong stimulus not to get out of line, because sooner or later some kind of MVA will almost certainly come into existence, and activities that injure the over-all picture and resources of the area will be struck out. There is, furthermore, a general wave of centralized socialism pushing us. It will come on stronger if we do not utilize the earth for man more wisely, and if it comes on, it will sweep away arbitrary exploitation outside its own plans of rationalization.

Again John L. Lewis

THE TWO WEEK work stoppage of the 425,000 members of the United Mine Workers in the nation's soft and hard coal mines east of the Mississippi, which began March 14, is in typical high-handed Lewis style. And again the furious round of protest rose from the newspapers of the country, spokesmen of business interests and leaders of other unions. In this instance the latter were particularly unhappy over the effect of this *démarche* on their efforts to extract certain teeth from the Taft-Hartley Act. It also gave the eastern railroads justification for work furloughs of their own affecting over 60,000 men. John L. Lewis makes no bones about self-preservation (of his United Mine Workers) and under present laws and contracts there still appears to be no way of stopping him, no matter how oblivious he is of the well-being of others.

His current unilateral act has a number of explanations. Immediately there is the state of the nation's stockpiles, which the stoppage will presumably whittle down to its seasonal normal on the eve of annual wage-contract negotiations. Closely related is the fact that the current glut of coal is threatening prices of the commodity and has led to shorter work weeks in a number of mines. In the background is the reported Lewis ambition to "stabilize" the coal industry on a long-range basis to protect workers and investors during leaner times.

Such objectives are widely held to make the avowed reasons (opposition to Dr. James Boyd as Director of the Bureau of Mines and the memorial to the dead and injured coal miners of 1948) sheer pretexts. Yet Mr. Lewis's opposition to Dr. Boyd is of long standing, whether out of personal pique at not being consulted on the choice, or whether Mr. Lewis really thinks that no one is able to grasp the safety problem without having actually served as a miner.

The memorial aspect of the stoppage is a curious note for people outside the industry. Yet that tradition is recognized even in current contracts. Moreover, it points to an explanation of the eagerness with which the UMW members respond to the slightest Lewis intimations. In 1948 more than 1,000 American coal miners were killed on the job and 50,000 were injured—the best safety record in the books. Men in such an industry, many of them living in the grimmest company towns, can hardly be expected to approach things on the basis of the broad national interest.

Federal mine inspection, with no enforcing power but the intangible wraith of public opinion, is unequal to the task regardless of who heads the Bureau of Mines. Mr. Lewis himself cannot be counted on to pull his men out of individual pits whenever danger signs appear. State inspection has been tragically ineffective. Here is one area where new federal legislation (such as the McNeely Bill, supported by Mr. Lewis) is essential.

Statistics and Social Conscience

IT WOULD BE FAR BETTER, Saint Augustine declared, if there were no hungry for charity to feed; far better if there were no poor, no sick, no indigent upon whom to exercise the temporal works of mercy. But would not, he rhetorically asked, the fire of charity then go out, unfueled? Certainly not, he replied: far purer is a charity that is not conditioned by necessity.

The Right Rev. Monsignor John O'Grady, secretary of the National Conference of Catholic Charities, told the House Ways and Means Committee that President Truman's bill to expand federal participation in state relief and welfare programs envisages a complete governmental taking-over of the entire field of child welfare. National control over family life was implied, Monsignor O'Grady said, with the Federal Government proposing virtually to guarantee every family what it needs on a budget basis. "It is beginning to look as if the Federal Security Agency wants to change the entire pattern, that it wants to give us a relief program rather than insurance program," he said. Such legislation would, Monsignor O'Grady contended, put religious and other private agencies out of the field of child care. Among the profound problems raised by this presentiment—problems of justice and charity, of public responsibility and neighborly duty, are those of statistics and the social conscience.

Ideally, of course, there are two admirable alternatives. Either when the community is so small, or so localized, that if sickness, poverty, or accident handicap one or more members, the others, collectively and individually, rally around. Thus, in justice, the trade union and the cooperative; thus, in charity, the pastor, and the neighbors. Or, in megalopolitan areas, if every citizen shares so completely in the life of the state, that he is conscious of, and participates in, the work his taxes do: this is my orphanage, my old-age pension, my roads; these are my lunatics, my prisoners, my dead in the city morgue.

But neither of these idealistic positions can be

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said to be true of the majority of contemporary Americans.

For lack of them, what can be best advocated here? Monsignor O'Grady has suggested that the Federal Government should improve its present child welfare work in the rural and special need areas, should provide more adequate local medical facilities and should expand old-age and survivor's insurance to cover farmers, domestics, and others gainfully employed who now are barred. But patching will not perfect. What is needed is a general orientation which will reconcile statistical truth with the necessity of individual participation.

In Europe today every agency, from the State and the Marshall plan, to the Church and the pious person, concentrate upon the child for political or emotional reasons; while the old shiver and starve unseen, alone and unaided. In the USA, where the vote remains a value, the aged share in communal benefits until the end. But only statistics can make the Federal Government or John Doe aware of where the needs are, in the cradle or at the grave's edge, and also of where they are not. Meanwhile, the lack of local responsibility, as of individual, increases hourly. A man lies dead-drunk in the gutter, and it is nothing to those who pass by; any accident is a potential involvement and embarrassment, an invasion of individual anonymity, and maybe, even, legally incriminating; hurry by, don't even look, lest, as at an auction, your interested eye land you in coroner's court or on witness stand. Bob Hope says that he likes to visit Washington to be near his money; how many of us, in all our lives, visit a state hospital, asylum, prison, police court, or clinic, simply to be near ours? Religion—the binding thing; how many citizens are engaged, are bound today, either in charity or in social conscience, to their neighbor? And who is my neighbor? Or has that question been asked before—and once too often?

Greek Refugees

WHEN MUSSOLINI'S troops turned on Greece in 1940, they ran into no push-over: for the Greek people began then their spirited, stubborn fight for life and for national independence, a fight against aggression that goes on today. After the retreat of the Axis armies from Greek soil, the rebel Greek Communists, supplied and armed by fellow revolutionists in Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, began a guerrilla civil war that has slashed away at the Greek Government since 1944.

During this time two things, principally, have kept the Government armies in the field: one, the toughness of the individual Greek fighter, and the other, American arms, money and military advice. In recent weeks this Greek-American combination has been paying off; the army has been re-organized and disciplined by General Papagos, between 50 and 70% of the guerrillas in the Peloponnesus have been mopped up, and in a major battle at Florina, near the Yugoslav border, the Greeks have routed a force of 4,000 rebels. Along with these military successes, some political reforms—such as the appointment of county prefects on merit rather than political considerations, and the decision to hold local elections in "safe" areas by June—have raised the hopes of the Greek people to a level of optimism.

However, with the bright side of events, the Greeks still have all the misery they need. Early this month the United Nations Special Commission on the Balkans, after examining the situation in Greece, issued a report asking the UN to face what it calls "a major humanitarian problem" in Greece. The Commission finds that in the last two years the number of refugees forced to flee their homes from the guerrilla operations has risen from 18,600 to 666,000. In addition, there are thousands of others, outside the military "security" zones, who are dependent on friends or relatives, bringing the total to a million refugees, or one-tenth of the population of Greece. The Commission adds that all resources for aiding the refugees have been exhausted, a fact which is now impeding "all possibilities of reconstruction."

The condition of the Greek refugees warrants emergency attention. For while observers in Greece have extravagant praise for the stamina of these people, there is a point of exhaustion beyond which the bravest men cannot go without "cracking." To have one-tenth of the population floating as refugees behind the fighting lines is also a serious handicap to the prosecution of the war.

And in the long run, if necessary political and social reforms are to work in Greece, the Government must have conditions of stable economic and social life, conditions which can hardly be established as long as the rehabilitation of refugees is held up. Establishing such conditions is ultimately the most effective way to restore peace in the country—by alleviating the social grievances which make communism attractive. A policy simply of anti-communism is negative and not enough. Toward this objective of rehabilitation, and toward speedier prosecution of the war, the US mission in Greece has pressed the Government there to extract from the wealthy a greater contribution to the national war effort. Such measures, together with international relief for this battle-fatigued people, will give them further assurance now, while there are some brighter prospects, that their long fight may issue in peace and in independence.

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Our Lenten Liturgy

Its full meaning: preparing for the great night of baptismal rebirth

H. A. Reinhold

THE CHIEF obstacle for the average Protestant to his understanding of Catholicism and, for that matter, also Orthodoxy, is his refusal to accept the fact of growth and development in the historic Church. The animus of the sixteenth century rebels struck a note deep down in the hearts of the "Nordic" peoples of Europe, the Germans, the Scandinavians, the Scots, the English, the Dutch, and Swiss, which is still echoing through their bewildered souls: the idea of a purified, primitive, original and evangelical Church, the Church of the apostles and martyrs, of the carpenter Jesus —not the Pantocrator, Saint Bernard's man of Dolors, Saint Teresa's Bridegroom of the Soul or Saint Margaret Mary's plaintive and neglected Savior. What are all the hundreds of sects but attempts of men to find that pure version of prehistoric Christianity that will guarantee them freedom from the institutional, the mediation of priests, the interposition of historical layers that look to them like alluvial mud and weeds on the pure face of the crystal clear gospel of Jesus. The sad thing about all this honest and sincere effort is that nobody seems to be able to find the one and only and safe criterion to decide what is "genuine" and what is human addition. Remember that Martin Luther had one idea which proved to be so conducive to his own attempt that he had to get rid of whole parts of the Old and New Testaments because they spoiled his pattern.

There is nothing bad in this urge toward evangelical and apostolic simplicity and the longing for a re-establishment of the heroic age of the Church. The saints had it: the fathers of the nitric desert fled from Alexandria to live their faith under "laboratory conditions." Saint Benedict transplanted the best men of his day from the weed patch of Rome into the clear mountain air of Monte Cassino. The man who inaugurated a new trend, Saint Bernard of Clairvaux (on whose shoulders stands Saint Francis, the representatives of personal and withdrawn bridal mysticism, the movement of the late medieval *devotio moderna,* Saint Ignatius and the baroque spirituality and its decay echoing through the bourgeois age)—Saint Bernard had a vision of original, apostolic and evangelical Christianity to be brought back by a reform. Where he differs from his great admirer, Martin Luther, is in his loyalty to the authority of Saint Peter—a frank and very outspoken loyalty at times—and in his organic understanding of handling the "grown" things in the Church. Therefore his reformation and his revolutionary innovation in attitude did not burst the Church, but were channeled like a mountain river tamed in the canals and ditches of an irrigation system, that makes the desert bloom.

It should be obvious from the results the later un-historic attitude has wrought upon Christendom that it is hardly to be recommended.

★

HOWEVER, there is another attitude which ought to be spotlight-focused for a while: the opposite one. It is that acceptance of finite results of an historical development as perfection itself, which is so common in religious matters among our contemporaries. While the reformers tried to find the roots, were "radical," by chopping down the trees, these people take a thick layer of ivy that has grown up about it for the tree. The latest thing to them is always the best thing, which may be true about ice boxes and cars, but should not automatically be applied to developments in the religious field.

Let us take a sample case, now very close to us all: the season of Lent. The Protestant attitude is to cast it out, because the Scriptures say nothing about it—which in its nakedness and as far as it goes is a pretty true statement. But what about the "bourgeois age" Catholic attitude according to which Lent means the following, more or less: no dancing, no shows, no sweets, no liquor, less meat, more prayers, confession plus Communion, a tin box to be filled with dimes and pennies by Easter, and a big doing from noon till three on Good Friday, with even the Jewish stores closed through the good offices of the Knights of Columbus in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce and the Rotary. So much for the technical details. Now for the spirit. It is briefly this: giving up things, pulling oneself together, after ten months of taking it easy, overshadowed by a detailed analysis of all the phases of the Passion of Our Lord by a famous Lenten

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preacher and with the help of the popular and dramatic Stations of the Cross. I am making no claim of being exhaustively complete in a short article destined to be read mostly by the laity. If my presentation sounds like a caricature, it serves its purpose of making a point through simplification and overemphasis of characteristics.

In search of an adjective for the over-all impression of this picture, I am hesitating among: pedestrian, uninspiring, dull, drab, perfunctory and a few more which show that there is no roaring enthusiasm here! It fits neatly into the mind pattern so familiar in this age which dwells on performance with little attention to the end of all the hustle and bustle. This looks like a sad defection of the Spirit. If what we are doing with all muscles flexed, in a great effort, makes not much sense, at least we are doing something and have the satisfaction of performance. Don't we even make the most of counting, adding, measuring in our spiritual lives, as if what mattered was quantity, not quality? With the fear of being disloyal by giving things a second look we will never outgrow this immature attitude.

A second look at the season of Lent, now that we are in the middle of it, may yield a better grasp of what we are doing. Rational obedience, whatever a certain spiritual school has done to belittle it and to move it into dangerous closeness to pride, is a more "human" and therefore better act than blind obedience and custom unquestioned.

*

SO MUCH history goes into the making of this magnificent period of Lent that a full appreciation is in itself a profound experience. There are so many unsolved riddles left that even now, after more than sixty years of research, one of our best scholars, the Austrian Jesuit Josef Andreas Jungmann, comes up with striking new results which may give a new evaluation even now, when we are tempted to assume that the last word has long been said.

In the "Miscellanea Liturgica" (Rome, 1948), a collection of articles published to honor the Maria Laach monk, Dom Cunibert Mohlberg, O.S.B., on his seventieth anniversary, he throws an entirely new light on the so-called octave of Pentecost which in turn reflects on Lent and Lenten spirit. A small detail, like the fact that the Masses for the first Monday and Tuesday in Lent are assigned to the "station churches" of St. Peter in Chains and St. Anastasia and a certain parallelism in texts shows here very clearly that, when Lent began with a Sunday, and before it was extended to exactly forty weekdays by starting it on "Ash" Wednesday, there was already a mood of penance cast over it: this first Monday gathered all penitents in this particular church of St. Peter to make a solemn beginning of their expiation. They entered the church of St. Peter in Chains, the Vicar of Christ and highest judge on earth, singing Psalm 122: "as the eyes of the slave are on his master's hands, so our eyes are turned to God, Our Lord, that He may have mercy on us." Then follows the double reading on the shepherd, one from Ezekiel: "what was lost, I shall seek, what was straying, I shall lead home, what was weak, I shall strengthen, what was firm and strong, I shall guard. I shall lead them to pasture, as is meet, saith God Almighty," and the other from Saint Matthew, showing the last judgment, when sheep and goats will be separated.

I wish the early Middle Ages at the time of Saint Bernard had not mutilated the deeply significant processional hymns at the offertory and communion to such a degree that they now are mostly "verses" to be "performed" instead of the deeply inspiring, carefully chosen and appropriate texts that once accompanied the solemn procession with the gifts at the offertory and for communion. The threefold repetition of the verse of response: "Give me insight, O Lord, that I may recognize Thy commandments" (full offertory) and the interlacing of verses 40 and 34 of Matthew 25, with psalm 3 (a rhapsody of human despair and fear and of divine response and hope) at communion time give depth of emotion and thought to this solemn initiation of penance which, because of its sober and meaningful allusions, leaves it to all penitents to fill the ample vessels of the liturgy with their individual experience without violating the chaste restraint so precious to the liturgy of Rome.

*

THIS IS BY no means all there is to say about Lent. The motif of penance is not even the first. A preceding period knew Lent primarily as the catechumenate, preparing for the great night of baptism, the night of Christ's resurrection. It is hard for us to realize how positively charged the atmosphere of Lent was in those days. As the heirs of a long process of pruning, reducing, cutting and streamlining we can hardly realize what adult baptism meant in that time—coming as the climax of a conscious conversion after the austerities of the immediate preparation of a Lent of several weeks. These prolix ceremonies with their repetitious exorcisms, which are now telescoped in one baptismal act of "adults," were once adroitly spaced over—the much shorter —Lent, together with other solemn ceremonies, as the tradition of the Lord's Prayer and the Creed, the opening of the ears and the so-called *scrutinia*.

Unless the parish clergy all over the land expound all these subtle allusions and stirring details to their congregations and read the full

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texts of the Masses to them, the individual faithful would have to carry a whole library around. Of course we have the late Father Stedman's great Lenten Missal for beginners. At least it has all the texts, but as compared with Dr. Pius Parsch's Lenten Missal even those who use it assiduously have before them a sealed book. St. Andrew's, Cabrol's and Lasance's Missals and the short breviary of St. John's Abbey would lead a step further in intelligent participation. The next step ought to be Cardinal Schuster's Sacramentary, as it explains something almost all other commentators neglect: the influence of local history, of the station church on "today's" Mass, here and now. Because without such information we are in many cases left without an understanding of why these texts were chosen. History and tradition are the main ingredients of nobility and culture. Only rootless upstarts have a so-called clean slate—they are indeed bereft of a great and venerable wealth and drift in the soggy mud of emotionalism and subjectivism.

After we have realized that we really need what Parsch gave the Austrian Catholics—the full, ample, restored texts of the unshortened Mass—we can only hope that a good publisher will give us the unabridged texts of our Masses: a table so rich in wholesome biblical food that one treatment, one Lent, will have restored more spiritual vitamins, more red corpuscles to our bourgeois and anemic life of faith than all the steam baths and massages of the conventional, even the hottest missions and retreats. No wonder—here is the wisdom of the age of the Fathers, who were the master composers, to be succeeded by critical analysts and sifters.

In other words, in Lent we repeat, in a true repetition, Kierkegaard's favorite term, our baptismal rebirth in Christ. The ceremonies of Ash Wednesday, composed at a time when the original idea of Lent was already on the wane, may give a certain preponderance to one aspect of Lent: penance and subsequent gloom. It would be a foolish enterprise to try to weed penitential spirit out of Lent, as foolish as the denial of the Cross to emphasize the triumph of Easter morning. But I fear our emphasis on penance is going too far—so far that the other side, preparation for re-birth, the focusing on the Resurrection, really comes in only as afterthought, just as so much of catechetical instruction dwells entirely on the more negative aspects of baptism—freeing from sin—and becomes very mute or inarticulate when it comes to unfolding the glories of the positive part, which Peter calls "consortium divinae naturae," which Ronald Knox translates as "sharing of divine nature," although "consortium" is richer than just "sharing" and the original "Koinonia" means a community of life which persists. This rebuilding, stone by stone—cell by cell, to be more organic—of Christ in us is the true purpose of Lent, not only the cleaning, weeding and scrubbing of penance.

Therefore Lent is solemn from one end to the other, solemn in texts, in music, in ceremonies. It can hardly be dealt with adequately by locking the liquor closet and hiding the cigars. The Stations of the Cross, narrowly focused on one phase of the work of redemption, albeit the most dramatic, are not all that Lent offers. As a matter of fact, the texts of the liturgy turn to it only on a few Fridays and during Holy Week, although not even then exclusively. There exists an obvious clash between so-called popular devotion of the post-medieval brand and the rich and differentiated symphony of liturgical prayer and mysteries—comparable to one page torn out of a book (and the full book), with this one page well worn and frayed at the edges.

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AT ONE of the frequent pastoral congresses which seem to be common occurrences in post-war France, this topic came up: what is the best subject for Lenten sermons? The famous exponent of the liturgical movement centered around Dom Lambert Beaudouin, and the Dominican "power house" on the Boulevard Latour-Maubourg, Father Chery, O.P., startled his clerical listeners by suggesting—Lent! At least it would have one thing in favor of a tryout: it would be a complete novelty! The great advantage would be that its textbook lies on every altar, is an authorized book of the Church, has been tried out for nearly 1500 years, and been on the shelf for half of the time. Just blow the dust off, take a good companion author as your Baedeker and start your trip through the adventurous discovery of a land of milk and honey instead of the usual all-purpose, canned fare.

I am sure no reader will misunderstand my plea for a liturgical Lent as a slap at existing practices. A soft Lent without rigor of penance, a thermometer of a generous and live faith, would be a dangerous deception, like a Christ without His passion, all sweetness and light. It would bring Mary Baker Eddy into the Church and emasculate the message Christ brought. What I am saying is a feeble attempt to make the average layman sit back and reflect that there is more to Lent. What good is a field plowed and raked and watered, with nobody sowing any seed? The vacui of nature would only bring all the more weeds onto it—as a matter of fact the weeds would have a field day. The opening of the sacred season, Septuagesima Sunday, does not have the gospel of the sower for no reason: this word maps the strategy in a masterful and simple statement.

One of the greatest re-discoveries for the Church is the late Dom Odo Casel's restoration

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of the Christian Pasch. Patiently following leads in the Church Fathers, in tradition and hints in legislation of the Church, he saw that "Easter" is an inseparable unit of the sacred Triduum, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and the "Great Night," seen as one. Popular notions have furthered a cleft-apart and dissociated attitude and have shifted emphases from essential to secondary and non-organic aspects: instead of the solemnity of Maundy Thursday (reconciliation of penitents—a grand, touching rite—washing of the feet, consecration of oils and commemoration of the Last Supper) what impresses the layman now is "the Holy Sepulchre" (a day before the commemoration of the crucifixion, of all things) and the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament "in the tomb." Instead of the majestic mourning of the Bride of Christ for the slain Bridegroom, on the originally a-liturgical Good Friday, in unsurpassed tunes and words, we have the narrowly-focused "Stations," partly biblical, partly late and local tradition, focused on the physical side of the greatest drama in history and ending in the gloom of the burial; and worse than this, the loud and operatic "Tre Ore," highly publicized and performed with all the stage craft, but with none of the genius, of a Handel Oratory or a Bach Passion. And—*melius est silere quam loqui*—then watch the solemn mystery of the Great Night, its immortal Exsultet, its sweet Alleluia, its profound Blessing of the Font and baptisms, its incredibly heavenly communion songs being "performed" before empty pews, not during the Great Night, but on an early spring morning, with the church ready for cleaning and the rush of confessions. It is open to question whether or not the early Church preferred morning or evening Masses, but here is one night which was always the sacred night. Now it is an anti-climax to all the busy doings of the two preceding days.

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I HOPE ALL THIS will not be taken for the ravings of a frustrated antiquarian. I have read my "Mediator Dei" with its warnings as carefully as the next man. Just because they have the flavor of antiquity, just because they appear to be obsolete to the multitude, these things would be no better than their modern "ersatzes." Nor do I under-estimate the upheaval needed to attune our spiritually anemic age to the fulness, mystery and immediacy of the sacramental world buried in books on high shelves of the scholars.

But there is no doubt in my mind that if the Catholic Church, an Incarnational, sacramental Body, as opposed to sects based on word, spoken and written, is to live on as such, we need this Lenten treatment. You can't live in a Protestant world without catching some of its influence (I don't mean this in a pejorative sense), its literalness, its subjectivism, its anarchy, its emotionalism, especially if the germ has already had three hundred years of tolerated development within the Church. What was not affected are the things codified and unchanged: Canon Law, Dogma, the Liturgy. Nor do I advocate aloof laboratory piety and morals. This fare is for the masses, lost and underfed, who differ from their contemporaries only by eating fish on Friday, being truculent anti-communists, using holy water, lighting votive candles and by not singing in their church. They are also supposed to have a better record on birth control, divorce, filth in print and on screens—which if true may prove to be the greatest contribution in saving us from any kind of demoralization that opens the gate, the back door perhaps, to collectivisms. But most of these are negations of bad, not rich fulness of self—communicating of Good.

Mysteries make present divine redemption, as the person of Christ was the substantial presence of God. The wealth of this Presence is unfolded in the sacramental vessel, His Body, the Church (which does not mean the clergy or the hierarchy, but that living One of Christ the Head and His Whole Body, lay and clerical) over seven great and untold minor mysteries, integrated and displayed in time, as a prism displays the light of the sun, through His sacred time, the Church year. Like a rising fountain its slaking waters erupt in full force in this sacred season. All our parched lips have to do, is: drink.

Men of Cold Passion

Fanatical selflessness replaces political wisdom

Jean C. de Menasce

NOTWITHSTANDING the pressure of hundreds of newspapers, the not imaginary danger of losing American help and a very shrewd and capable propaganda, the communists in Italy have held all their positions; their leaders have never doubted or wavered. All were ready, if such was the price, to have hundreds of thousands die of hunger, thousands lose their souls, for the building of a new civilization. That many of those who voted communist did not grasp the full meaning of the issues is obvious, but their leaders certainly knew what they were about and did it without flinching. What kind of men are those leaders? I think that they could be divided into two types: "the saint" and "the superman." "The bestial saint" and "the engineer-superman."

The first lets himself be devoured by the "Cause." He is ready in a sort of tragic frenzy to agree and submit to a total destruction of himself, his honor, his loyalties, his judgments, his

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very being. He is as if possessed by a dark passion that brings him to find his joy in death, in self-abasement, total obedience. He is ready to lose himself for the Cause, as the romantic lover is for his beloved.

The engineer-superman, the Commissar, who dominates, manipulates, cuts, plans, orders and destroys, is ready to pay any price to reach his goal. Men with their joys, their sorrows, their hopes, don't exist for him. He does not give men their rightful place and just evaluation. Under his cold stare all men in their personal and concrete lives become mere instruments and tools. Living humanity can perish for the sake of future humanity.

Man is not for him a "thou"; isn't a "whole"; is but a "part" that must at whatever cost be adapted to the whole. The joys, the hopes, the honor, the death of others have no other value for this titan, for this sadistic idealist, than that of shadows necessary for the beauty of a picture.

I have experienced the temptation to admire these two types of men and to reproach myself for not knowing or wanting to love the Church and God with that frantic purity. Faced with these types of communists I had a sort of inferiority complex. I used to think that if only they would change the direction of their love they would be saints. This is no longer my position. Not only is the object of their passion mistaken, but their cold passion is in no way made of the same stuff as charity. Their passion is neither the dawn, nor the midday, nor the twilight of charity. That passion nurtures its roots in the obscure depths of instinctive life. Their passion is neither human nor superhuman, but below the human level.

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THE FIRST TYPE of communist has lost the sense called "I"; the second, the sense called "thou." When the "I" and the "thou" become "thing," as Martin Buber says, the heart of man becomes the easy prey to a double perversion. When the gift of self, calm and generous, is replaced by a sort of drunken desire to lose oneself, the gift becomes a sort of prostitution, and brotherly authority of man over man, respectful and measured, becomes a cold wind of domination and tyranny.

When man has lost the love of the "I" and the "thou" he is seized by a sort of frightful dialectic. He himself and the others have no longer around them the safety zone and living space of personal rights. There subsists no intimate dignity which has to be respected and which cannot be immolated as in the human sacrifices of old. And as in the ancient civilizations human sacrifices and prostitution were the cult of the idol, so today the civilization, production, the State, future humanity, demand the same kind of total dedication. And it is the same type of man that can become either victim or commissar.

To obtain social, religious, or any kind of results we cannot overstep certain bounds. Nobody can sacrifice in himself or in others certain sacred zones of independence. I do not believe that it was with a light heart that the two types of communists have crossed the boundary. But they have done it, and they are now ready to live according to their own terrible catechism.

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The "Catechism of a Revolutionary," an anonymous pamphlet, says: "The revolutionary is a man already condemned. He has no personal interests, no business, no sentiment, no ties. Nothing is his, not even his name. Everything in him is dominated by one exclusive interest, one thought, one unique passion, the revolution. He has severed every tie with public order, with the civilized world, with every law, every convention, every morality. He is the implacable enemy of this world and if he goes on living in this world he is not of this world. In his eyes whatever does not contribute to the triumph of revolution is evil. Everything that retards his march is immoral. He works coldly, passionately, to reach his goal and is ready to perish and destroy with his own hands all that puts itself in his way."

The Catholic mystic—I don't say the little civic humanitarian moralist who lives his Christian life in optimistic simplicity—knows the temptation and the danger that the heart of man runs when he crosses certain interior frontiers. The Catholic mystic has seen that impure spirit with its two facets of aggressiveness and passivity, of domination and victimization, issue forth from the interior caverns of the soul and pollute not only poetry and art but religion and politics. This dark passion is not a little modern invention. Antiquity has known this passion to break the dikes; the "atrocious rites of savages, of self-mutilation, the inhuman asceticism of fakirs, spread and repeat themselves too often in human history, to be explained away as artificial and superficial aberrations. Modern man, solidly entrenched in his culture, thinks that he has freed himself forever of that passionate desire of self-dissolution. But when the dikes break we see humanity engulf itself in an orgy of blood that astonishes the world and makes men put the blame on finance, armament, industries, the Jews or Free Masonry."

These obscure forces of the soul have given origin to the curious myths of the female and male gods, and it may be that the new concepts of the Commissar and the Revolution are not political solutions of political problems but are the new myths that bring about a recurrence not of the small-time paganism, cheerful and sexy, of

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the nineteenth century, but of the fearful and tragic paganism that the "Good News" dissolved, as light the night.

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THE COMMISSAR thinks himself God; he is not a political man with normal human relations with his colleagues and subjects. He is not as Our Father in Heaven Who calls every one of His creatures by his name. But he is a demiurge, a sort of ruthless Michelangelo who molds passive matter without the least respect. The revolutionary and prostitute considers his chief not as a political organizer, not even as a son regards his father, not even as the Christian considers his God; but as the pantheist or the Christian heretic who craved to be nothing and to be damned for the glory of his God. The Commissar and his people are, as Shakespeare put it, as two devils under one yoke, each one dedicated to the whims of the other.

Political life can no longer be thought of as a political and practical relationship; it has become a monstrous copulation. The secret police find in the heart of these real communists a yielding and conniving mood, a bestial survival in man's moral make-up. As Saint Thomas remarks, the beast does not survive outside its own species. It is in the species that the beast finds a sort of eternity. In killing or dying for the species the animal experiences a sort of ecstasy. Entomologists tell us of certain insects that die at the moment of nuptial flight.

Self-immolation and the destruction of others for the sake of a future humanity manifest a sort of bestial survival in our human world. Man, forgetting that he is man, with a personal destiny, finds his joy and his good in killing and dying for the future humanity. The intellectual and moral error of these two sorts of communists is to forget that man is man and that a political good therefore must be human. What is good and natural in the animal world becomes a perversion and retrogression in the human world. Here again, economic and political solutions are not enough. Men must be brought back to the sense of the unique value of the "I" and "thou." When we view man simply as "manpower," "constructive force," or "consumer," we are crossing a very dangerous border-line. Economic and political reforms can create certain protections around human personality, but it is only when man recognizes that he is in immediate relation with the good, the true and the beautiful that he realizes his absolute value. So as not to be swept into the whirlpool of bestiality, where man thinks himself nothing and of no account, we must continue to be aware that God takes note of each one of us and, as Pascal puts it, has shed for me this drop of blood.

It is this position of absolute pantheistic monism which prevents the communists from communizing themselves. Communists when they come to power can nationalize schools, universities, industries, houses, fields, but they cannot popularize, socialize their own culture and their own creed. Their theories and their ethical positions cannot be shared by the common man.

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IT IS obvious that a popularized culture has not all the advantages of a refined one. But there must not be discontinuity between the thinking ways of élites and of the masses if we are to create a civilization. The great civilizations were achieved when the way of thinking of élites could be transmitted to the common man without fundamentally corrupting itself. Catholicism is certainly a very hierarchical and authoritarian world; but her truth is fundamentally democratic. There is not in Catholicism one truth for the initiated and one for the rank and file. That is even one of the factors that irritates most a certain type of intellectual, who would like to have a very inaccessible and hermetically sealed truth and not undergo having as companions in knowledge the charwoman and the grammar school brat.

Christian truth in its highest expression (the Gospel) is at one and the same time the deepest and the most easily assimilated; even Christian truth elaborated and technically worded as in theology books is essentially the same truth that we find in the penny catechism. What make the Holy Father or Maritain or the charwoman work, pray, sacrifice themselves, are the same truths because, as Bergson expresses it, Catholic theology and Catholic philosophy use as intellectual instruments Aristotelian philosophy, "metaphysics of good sense that correspond to the spontaneous and essential structure of human intelligence."

Human intelligence is essentially and permanently dialectical, realistic and ethical. Marxist monisms are not interior positions that can be shared by the popular good sense. When the "commissar" or the "victim-prostitute" want their positions to be assimilated by the masses, they must either make an appeal to what Stalin calls "vulgar and economic materialism" or to Christian virtues as love of the poor and desire of justice.

Remo Cantoni, one of the most intelligent Italian communists, aware of the problem, thinks that to popularize itself dialectical Marxism must transform itself into a myth. But if child intelligence is poetically and mythically inclined, the man in the street, although childish, is practically and ethically minded. The average man is more an ethical man than a metaphysical man, while Marxism as such is a cosmic and not an

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ethical vision. "No moral system can be deduced out of Marxism." But when Marxism has to develop mass support, when it must warm man's hearts to bring about action and sacrifice, the communist leaders must sound ethical notes to which they themselves are deaf.

Thus there is a necessary rupture and discontinuity between the interior life of the leaders and that of the rank and file. There is no inter-play of thought. There can be no collective possession of ideas and aims, and therefore, as the Holy Father puts it, communism can only manipulate the masses; it can never create a people whose ideas are not external to man but are vitally integrated into his personal life.

Communications

CIVIL RIGHTS

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editors: . . . I think you have handled my proposed compromise on civil rights with considerable understanding [editorial "Civil Rights," THE COMMONWEAL, March 11].

I have never contended that I have come up with the answer. I have attempted more than anything else to create an atmosphere in which this most perplexing problem can be discussed free of emotion and prejudice. I am firmly convinced that we must find the answer and if I can contribute anything to the solution of the problem I will feel that my service here has been justified.

HON. BROOKS HAYS (*Arkansas*),
House of Representatives.

ELECTION IN PORTUGAL

South Windsor, Conn.

TO the Editors: It was with delight that I read your editorial on the recent "elections" in Portugal. Your conclusions were enlightened and correct, and I am sure that all who know anything about Portugal will want to salute you for it. [Issue of March 4, 1949.]

It seems to me that Portugal should merit more attention than it has been getting. Being one of the nations in the Marshall Plan, and now considered important for the North Atlantic Pact, as well as a proposed member of the UN, we should know the chances that the democratic, anti-communistic forces have; and how much help the government of Salazar is giving towards the attainment of a liberal democratic government. In that respect your editorial is most welcome because it raises the issue, but I think much more is needed, and most important of all we should have a policy on Portugal.

Many of us Portuguese-Americans do not like the way things have been going and are going in Portugal. We feel that as much as we love to help our native land, a time has come when our allegiance to the democratic ideals of democracy, as generally considered the way of life in the U.S.A., demands that we oppose strongly the methods used by the Dictatorship which are antagonistic to the people living under it.

We feel that the U.S.A. should not compromise with the basic principles of democracy. Since Portugal is basically against all that we consider democratic, then we should plainly indicate to the Dictatorship that we cannot risk our ideological beliefs for the sake of an insignificant and temporary advantage.

While we can successfully deter and defeat communism, ideologically, by the active practice of democracy, its [Portugal's] Dictatorship is actually driving the people to the adherence of communistic ways. Communistic strength has so increased in Portugal under Salazar that for the first time the Soviets consider it worth the money and effort to have a daily broadcast in Portuguese beamed directly. . . .

Left alone, Salazar, and the totalitarian government which he heads, would be defeated by the people of Portugal, but the democratic forces there maintain that the help and assistance that the U.S.A. gives at strategic moments is too much for their meager resources.

I think if we make up our minds and direct our actions towards the goal of inspiring the people of Portugal with democratic, liberal, reform solutions, based on the true teachings of Catholicism, we shall not have to fear either revolution or communism.

A PORTUGUESE-AMERICAN.

THE ECONOMICS OF LENT

Corning, California.

TO the Editors: In your editorial of March 4th, "The Economics of Lent," you are quite right in insisting that the recent lag of retail sales is not a good reason to be as alarmed as some business circles seem to be. . . .

The fact that the big national spending spree of the Christmas season happened just a little over two months ago is one large contributing factor to the recent sales lag. Furthermore, the occurrence of the Lenten season coincidental with the season for paying income taxes could easily account for a faulty diagnosis. . . .

But only people in the rural areas of our country can fully realize the fact that most farmers have seasonal incomes which, on the average, reach their lowest point soon after Christmas. I suppose there may not be any statistics to prove that many farmers' lack of steady income has much to do with any nation-wide seasonal sales lag but I maintain that it is reasonable to think so.

JOHN SILBERSACK.

COOPERATIVES

Detroit, Mich.

TO the Editors: . . . I was very pleased with the fact that you dealt [The Auto Workers and Co-ops, COMMONWEAL, Feb. 25, 1949] with the implications of our program from the point of view of the development of democracy in the country, rather than from the *Wall Street Journal's* approach, which consistently tried to assay the meaning of the program in terms of cash register receipts.

VICTOR G. REUTHER,
Director of Education,
UAW-CIO.

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CATHOLIC INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Apostolic Delegate in Sumatra

A MESSAGE from Pope Pius XII, expressing the Holy Father's best wishes for the prosperity of the new State of South Sumatra (Negara Sumatra Selatan) was handed to the Head of State (Wali Negara), Abdul Malik, at the end of February by the Apostolic Delegate in Indonesia, Belgian-born Archbishop G. de Jonghe d'Ardoye. The trip to Palembang, capital of the new State, was the Apostolic Delegate's second visit to Sumatra, the largest of the Indonesian islands. The State of South Sumatra is one of the constituent parts of the United States of Indonesia, the organization of which has not yet been completed.

The Head of State was surrounded by several prominent members of the Government when he received Archbishop de Jonghe d'Ardoye. He expressed profound gratitude for the Vatican's interest in the welfare of the State.

The Apostolic Delegate also visited the various Catholic missionary institutions at Palembang, especially the Minor Seminary. In an address, he declared that the Seminary is of particular importance because "in the future, Indonesia must not only produce its own political leaders but also Indonesian priests who can take charge of pastoral care." The Archbishop expressed great satisfaction about the progress of Catholic education. Since his previous visit, in January, 1948, two Catholic high schools, one for boys and one for girls, and a vocational school have been started. The vocational school consists of two departments, one using Dutch as the language of instruction, the other Malay.

There are no native priests yet on Sumatra. The number of Catholics on the whole island is about 30,000, among a population of 10 millions. (Batavia, 3/8, CIP.)

Indonesian Seminary Begun Anew

NEWS has just been received from Indonesia that the Minor Seminary of the Diocese of Semarang has been reopened at Djokjakarta February 3, with a student body of 82. Eighty-three students were registered, but one of them was killed by a stray bullet during the preceding vacation.

When the Diocese was established in June 1940, the Seminary was at Mertojoedan. During the Japanese occupation, there was no regular Seminary at all, but seminarians were taught in small groups at various places. Indonesian troops occupied the seminary building at Mertojoedan when the Republic of Indonesia was established. The Seminary, therefore, was established in a building at Ambarawa. Ambarawa was occupied by Dutch troops in their first "police action" against the Republic. The students happened to be on vacation at that time, and most of them stayed in the neighborhood of Djokjakarta. The Rector, Father Th. van der Putten, S.J., gathered them together and reopened the seminary in a small building at Gandjoeran.

Later it was transferred to the much larger mission buildings at Moentilan. These were destroyed recently by bands of fanatic Moslems belonging to the "Hisboellah" organization. Father van der Putten made a trip to Batavia and was eventually able to gather enough furniture and books to reopen the Seminary again in a new building at Djokjakarta. (The Hague, 3/12—CIP.)

Java Missions Safe

THREE Netherlands priests and a group of Holy Ghost nuns who remained in the most important mission stations in the interior of Java during the fighting between the Dutch and Republican forces are safe, according to reports received here. None of the buildings of the mission stations was damaged, these reports state, although other buildings on the same streets were demolished.

At Tjepu, which was occupied by Republican troops, almost every structure on Deterding Avenue was destroyed except the Catholic church and parish house. Demolition charges were placed in all large buildings at Madiun by Republican forces, according to the reports, except the old and the new church, a parish house, and social center. (The Hague, 2/17—CIP).

Party Line Helps in Peking Area

COMMUNIST propaganda agents are unwittingly helping the spread of Catholicism in the Peking area of China, according to the "Fides" news agency.

A missionary just returned from Peking relates that many Chinese living high in the mountains close to the Mongolian border, which have been occupied by communist forces, have never seen a Catholic priest nor heard of the Catholic religion. Their curiosity is aroused when communist propaganda and education officials condemn the Church and its clergy in speeches following the usual Marxist line. For many of these Chinese, the missionary declares, atheistic propagand has been the first step towards conversion. They sought out a Catholic priest to learn more about the religion which they had heard denounced by communist agents. (Rome, 3/10—CIP.)

Japanese Notes

ARCHBISHOP Paul Marella, Apostolic Delegate to Japan, who left Tokyo February 12 for the same post in Australia, was received by Emperor Hirohito February 4. The Emperor expressed his "deep appreciation" of the educational and charitable work being done by Catholic missionaries in all parts of Japan. He also expressed his wishes for the success of the international pilgrimage to the Catholic shrines in Japan, starting May 29, in celebration of the fourth centenary of the arrival of St. Francis Xavier. (Tokyo, 2/19—CIP).

THE IMPERIAL University of Kyushu, Southern Japan, now offers a course in Scholastic Philosophy and ras appointed a Canadian Dominican Father as Professor in the subject. He is the Reverend Philip Deslauriers, O.P., a native of Ottawa, who first arrived in Japan two years after his ordination in 1933. (Fukuoka, 3/4—CIP.)

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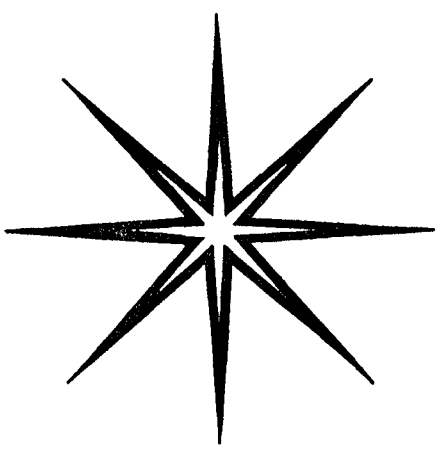
Symbols of Christ

The Star of Jacob

"Balaam, the son of Beor, the man whose eyes are open has said: 'I shall see Him but not now; I shall behold Him but not nigh; then shall come a star out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel, and shall strike the chiefs of Moab.'" (*Numbers* 24, 17).

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Juda in the days of Herod the king, behold there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem saying, 'Where is he that is born king of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the East and are come to adore him.'" (*Matthew* 2, 2).

"I, Jesus, am the bright morning star." (*Apoc.* 22, 16).



THE FACT that the course of the celestial bodies influences life on earth led people of old to the belief that the heavenly world of the stars is the archetype and model of the earthly world, and that the stars in their unchangeable course—"dei aeterni," as the Greeks used to call them—determine the fate of man.

In the Old Testament the stars are not gods. They are the obedient servants of the Lord of hosts who created them. "They were called and they said: Here we are: and with cheerfulness they have shined forth to Him that made them" (*Baruch* 3, 35). When God laid the cornerstone of the earth, "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted with joy" (*Job* 38, 7). The stars are symbols of the just who obey God's commands and, therefore, declare His glory.

The king of Babylon is the rebellious star who wants to rule without serving his God. He is overthrown by the creator of heaven and earth, as Isaias says of him: "How art thou fallen from heaven, Lucifer, son of the morning? How art thou fallen to the earth that didst wound the nations?" (*Isaias* 14, 12). Only one star will rise to world domination: the "star of Jacob," the Messias. He is the "morning star," because He was begotten before the day of creation (*Psalm* 109). When He appears here on earth, the "star in the east" rises to announce His birth. He runs His course in perfect obedience, and glorifies His Heavenly Father (*John* 17, 4). When the Last Day dawns, He will be there, "the bright morning-star," and those who have overcome will receive Him (*Apoc.* 2, 28) and He will rise in their hearts. (*II Peter* 1, 19).

DAMASUS WINZEN.

The Stage & Screen

The Big Knife

THE ASTONISHING rhetoric Clifford Odets has welded to his astonishing plot in this peculiar performance is almost indescribable and I am at a loss to know where to begin a review. I suppose the inch-by-inch method will be safest in attempting to expose the fable, but as I shall undoubtedly bog down long before the end, I am somewhat worried as to the fate of the reader. In this country, however, you're not supposed to be shot for trying, and we might as well get on with it.

Mr. Odets presents a Hollywood scene. Charles Castle, a renowned young actor, is offered a new contract delivering him over to his studio for fourteen years and earning him a quarter of a million dollars a year. Regarding this contract, his wife has left him—her view being that fourteen years of playing the same part is no life for a man, nor, consequently, for his family. We learn how said Charles is blackmailed into signing by the occurrence of a motor accident a year before, on a Christmas eve, in which accident he killed a child, and only escaped retribution by allowing the studio to send his best friend (his press-agent) to jail in his place. We learn that the Best-Friend's alcoholic Wife suspects this deal and is thereby enabled to force the hero into an affair. We also learn of the existence of A Girl who, having been the sole witness to the accident, is about to "talk" due to the seeming indifference of the hero in regard to her beauty, her honesty, and her obvious desire for his company. We then learn the studio's implacable scheme for "wiping out" this Girl.

Finally, in quick succession (as the play reels), we learn that the competent Wife of the piece is seemingly not above reproach in connection with a coast-marooned Writer with ideas of honor; we learn of the Best-Friend's sudden knowledge of the betrayal with *his* wife; and by dint of a good deal of water cascading on the stage, we learn of Charles Castle's suicide in the bathroom directly at the top of his expensively monstrous staircase. The characters not already mentioned are the evil Producer, the Producer's evil Henchman, the hero's good Agent, the

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evil Female Columnist, the good Negro Servants, and the good Doctor Neighbor. And I guess that's the best I can do.

On the score of language, however, there is still something to be added. As I have said before, the language is as astonishing as the plot. At one point a critic is quoted as naming this actor "The Van Gogh of the American Theatre." At another, a character is described as a "great grotesque soul" because "he moves his lips when he reads." Chastity is likened to grand lonely equestrian statues in a park. At one exit in the muddle of the doings, somebody laughingly remarks, "This isn't a Russian novel!" at which point the audience manifested the only wholehearted boff of the evening.

Mr. Odets's advance promotion (and there's been an incessant amount of it) has been bent on proving him an angry man. But who and what he is angry about is impossible to determine. It would seem, adding his promotion to his history, that he is angry about his position in our society: a position which might be described as that of a man who thinks to the left at the same time as holding jobs as far to the right as possible. But in such a position, a man's ultimate anger ought only to be directed against himself—a circumstance the playwright does not seem to have fully understood. And there is no question that this inner confusion is directly responsible for the appalling technical fallacies of the piece. Certainly the play which presents its catastrophe—that Christmas eve when the enormous pressures put upon the hero proved too much for his integrity—only in *talk* and never in *action* cannot be said to be worth much as document or drama. In fact, it cannot be said to have a hero at all, since we see him only spiraling further and further into weakness without ever once having seen him strong. His disgruntled death can only provide relief from the mess of thought and language he has been hurling about the stage.

It is no critical evasion to suggest that this author walk four blocks up the town to learn how the American paradox (tragedy) is to be handled without social, ethical, or artistic pretensions. It is true Arthur Miller's *Salesman* is not angry, it's merely sure. Moreover, and which will perhaps most impress Mr. Odets, it is producing box-office records as well as discussion. (*At the National.*)

They Knew What They Wanted

JOHN GOLDEN'S admirable revival of the Sidney Howard prize-winner offers Paul Muni as star, a fact which seemed entirely pleasing to a crowded house. However, I imagine everyone will agree that it is the playing of Carol Stone in the part of the Girl which is providing the chief surprise of the piece. In a rôle which can only be called emotionally embracing, Miss Stone is honest and skilled, and it is difficult to watch anyone else on the stage.

The play itself having been several times movied, and theatrically revived before, may appear somewhat worn as to plot, commonplace as to language. But it does provide the novelty of observing the dramatic convention of only twenty-five years ago. The pre-atom convention, I

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suppose this should be called, in which characters could walk and talk in a more spacious tempo: slower, more thoughtful, less fearful. If for nothing less than this exercise in nostalgia, I should say the evening is worth a ticket. (*At the Music Box.*)

Two Blind Mice

THE VIRTUE—and I imagine a good many people would term it a virtue—of the next two offerings will be that you cannot possibly think of them afterwards. In fact, you cannot even remember them. I find myself combing my Cort Theatre program for the usual carping notes and discovering only the reiterated word *cheers,* underlined. Samuel Spewack's comedy is formula stuff and, as such, a fairly funny business. His story embraces two small determined women operating a forgotten office in present-day Washington: the office of "Seeds and Standards." And his play circles about the successful efforts of a nephew-in-law to reinstate this Office as well as reinstating himself with the wife-niece of the story.

Melvyn Douglas's accomplished playing smooths a good many corners in this fable, and Mabel Paige and Laura Pierpont are fine as the "Mice" of the title. I cannot recall a more entertaining, less important evening in this season. It's simply fun. (*At the Cort.*)

At War With The Army

THE "CHEERS" greeting this Ezra Stone arrangement of Henry May's and Jerome E. Rosenfeld's army farce were perhaps even more hilarious. The business is very young, entirely facile, and having to do with the "waiting war" fought by numbers of our troops in every outpost of the world, presents a good many opportunities for outright shenanigans. There is a marvelous Coca-Cola machine as hero of the piece, which will, I imagine, give you a fair idea of the goings-on. (*At the Booth.*)

KAPPO PHELAN.

Wanna Buy a Bunny?

NOW THAT "Two Front Teeth," the reigning silly song of last Christmas, has succumbed to its successor, an Easter ditty about a kid with a plethora of bunnies, the time has come for us to give a look, or at least a peek, at the new crop of comedies occupying our screens. The only point that these comedies seem to have in common, as the seasons change from teeth to bunnies, is that their stars find themselves in equally embarrassing positions.

David Niven has to portray a genius in *"A Kiss in the Dark,"* a genius who was always so busy practicing, taking care of his hands and giving piano concerts that he never had time to be a man. How Jane Wyman, as a photographer's model, rectifies this situation with considerable help from Victor Moore provides the plot of this amusing screenplay. Director Delmar Daves must have realized that movie portraits of geniuses, what with emphasis on delicate stomachs, sensitive nerves and temperamental attitudes toward fellow men, are likely to get rather corny, so whenever the plot's clichés got too obvious, he turned Victor Moore loose on the set; and Moore's wonderful comedy style puts everyone in good humor. Moore's position in the story is as the manager of a building owned by Niven. Our genius finally comes down from his ivory tower and learns that life is more fun if you live it with other people, even if these people are your impecunious tenants and especially if one of your tenants is as attractive as Miss Wyman.

The embarrassment in which Loretta Young finds herself in *"Mother Is a Freshman"* is that of a Park Avenue widow who suddenly goes broke and then enrolls at a college where her name entitles her to a scholarship plus $3,000 a year. Loretta is not disturbed so much by the fact that her own daughter (Betty Lynn) is a sophomore at this school as by the situation created when mom and daughter fall for the same English prof (Van Johnson). The remarkable thing about this slight movie is not that it tries to avoid the obvious, but that it doesn't even pursue to the fullest its humorous possibilities. Nevertheless Director Lloyd Bacon manages to get several good laughs out of the situation and Loretta Young looks stunning in or out of college. Rudy Vallee, Barbara Lawrence and a large supporting cast of handsome girls and boys help the principals to make this school much different from the one you attended. Anyway this comedy provides some frothy fun, and its sentiments aren't to be confused with the old days when m-o-t-h-e-r spelled mother.

Most men would think themselves pretty lucky to have an attractive widow (like Claudette Colbert) as their bride. Fred MacMurray does, until *"Family Honeymoon"* lives up to its name; then Fred finds himself taking not only lovely Claudette to the Grand Canyon but also her three youngsters. These kids are cute enough to look at, but they turn out to be perfect demons when it comes to cooking up embarrassments for their new papa. Fred's former flame (Rita Johnson) manages to give Claudette a few unhappy moments too. Director Claude Binyon keeps this farce moving at a rapid pace, but it lacks surprises and you soon get surfeited with shots of Fred dangling over a canyon or chasing the kids hither and yon. Then again, you may agree with one of the tots who says, "Gee, a honeymoon's fun."

"Take Me Out to the Ball Game" presents Frank Sinatra and Gene Kelly as ball players of first calibre. Gene mugs a lot and accepts his assignment well, but Frankie seems a bit embarrassed by the whole thing. Perhaps this embarrassment is part of the rôle, for he is supposed to be a very shy lad who falls for the owner of the team, played by none other than Esther Williams who swims only once in the whole picture. Since this is a musical comedy, it is not to be taken seriously; but unfortunately its director, Busby Berkeley, lets the involved plot get in the way of the fun, and a rather tedious story frequently interrupts the well-staged musical numbers. Everything picks up considerably however whenever Betty Garrett is on the screen. Her carefully aimed passes at Sinatra finally leave Esther free for Gene. Ball fans, Sinatra fans and admirers of technicolored musicals about the early 1900's will probably lap all this up. Anyone else better stay home with the bunnies.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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Books

A Popular History of the Catholic Church. Philip Hughes. Macmillan. $3.50.

THE FIRST THREE volumes of Philip Hughes's *A History of the Church*—up to 1517—which have thus far been completed and published (by Sheed and Ward) have shown the author to be a learned and orderly, a very interesting, and a very subtle historian. This short (269 pp.) popular history embodies in its carefully abbreviated form the same qualities, and in more concentrated form. Philip Hughes has a careful and modest view of the historian's rôle, and he is extremely reticent about judgments and lessons which less conscientious historians these days derive from far more superficial studies of the past. The author is a Christian (a secular priest) and a Thomist; he has a viewpoint and philosophy, and he does not seek from history a metaphysics and faith to serve the purpose. His work gives more information and knowledge than it does "pattern." The present excellent resumé of the immense subject clearly and intelligently gives, as the author expresses his purpose, "a very general impression of leading events, of tendencies, and of the personalities that shaped them and were shaped by them."

There is a distinction between the Catholic Church and the Catholic religion, even though the meaning and deepest importance of the Church is religious, and the institution and society of the Church is itself religious. The emphasis of this volume is institutional, upon the course of the Church in the secular world, and upon the clergy, the hierarchy, and particularly the papacy. The relations of Church and State down the centuries bulks relatively large: the Church opposed to the State, the State at the service of the Church, the State utilizing and subordinating the Church, the State against the Church. The compass is boxed clearly and understandably (not necessarily chronologically), but the author refrains extraordinarily from drawing flat conclusions or enunciating "historical decisions" and laying down what to do now. Readers of Philip Hughes' longer *History* will miss especially the fairly brief but richly stimulating sections which in that work periodically sketch the climate of thought and prayer and worship among Christians as it developed with the centuries. In so short an examination of the whole subject as this one, that can be done only in notation and indirectly, mostly through the introduction—or identification—of numerous saints and churchmen through whom the Faith is handed down. With its carefully chosen limits and thoroughly pleasing narrative prose style, this book is a very valuable over-all survey, bringing to any reader, however instructed or uninstructed, a good view of the succession of eras and persons and problems by which the Catholic Church has lived and changed, while remaining from "St. Peter to Constantine" to "The Contemporary Scene, 1878-1946" the same thing.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

Southeast Asia. Crossroad of Religions. Kenneth Perry Landon. Chicago University Press. $4.00.

THIS IS ONE of the most interesting books I have read recently—fascinating in spite of its pedestrian and too specialized writing. Southeast Asia is, besides the Balkan Peninsula, the most suitable area for studying the mutual influences of rather heterogeneous civilizations and the resistance of old traditions to the expansion of more sophisticated religions. This book of a Protestant missionary specializes in four topics: the Sinicization of Annam, the Hinduization of Siam, the Islamization of Java and the recent Westernization of the whole area.

The book is based both on personal impressions of villages invaded by foreign influences and on the rich new literature about Southeast Asia. Especially the problem of the Hinduization of Indo-China and Siam has been evolved more clearly in recent works by two French, two Indian and one English author: G. Coedes, L. Malleret, B. R. Chatterji, R. C. Majumdar, and H. G. Q. Wales. Following on their achievements, Mr. Landon is able to integrate his monographic research into a coherent picture of Southeast Asia

It seems to Mr. Landon that Western civilization has affected Southeast Asia more profoundly than any previous influence. The Christian missionary brought to these countries the doctrine of the integrity of the individual and his intrinsic value. This meant a revolutionary opposition to the collective authority of the clan or of the village. But not only this spiritual influence came to the Asiatic nations. The contact with the Occident and its capitalistic system brought the breakdown of village autonomy and introduced the power of capital into a society which hitherto was able to subsist without it. The author sees the success of missions in Southeast Asia not so much in their spiritual influence, which he thinks to be relatively modest, but in such secular achievements as opening dispensaries, building modern hospitals, erecting model leper homes, urging prison reforms, lecturing on modern science, compiling dictionaries, introducing printing, indoctrinating the public with modern hygienical methods, etc. In this cultural regard, Dr. Landon claims, the Christian missionaries have accomplished enough to satisfy even the most critical observer.

In a very impressive way Mr. Landon points out the paradox that the Westernization of the Asiatic nations strengthened their resistance against the domination of the West. The colonial powers encouraged the best students of Westernized schools in Southeast Asia, through scholarships of various sorts, to go to Occidental countries for securing their higher education. It is just this Westernized, indigenous minority which created most of the difficulties for the colonial powers and which fraternized with the Japanese during the Second World War. The reception of Occidental ideas incited the intelligentsia much more against Western imperialism than did a conservative education within the framework of their own Oriental traditions. It is characteristic that the Annamese declaration of independence is based literally on the American Declaration of Independence of 1776 and the French declaration of the "Rights of Man and of the Citizen" of 1791. It is from these historic declarations that the Vietnamese Republic came to the basic statement: "All peoples on the earth are equal from birth, all the people have a right to live, be happy and be free."

Appended to the book are a very useful bibliography, unfortunately a rather incomplete index, and the first English translation of the description of the Khmer capital of Angkor in 1296, by the Chinese ambassador Tcheou Ta-Kuoan. His observations are the only extensive eyewitness report that has been preserved of this civilization, now being buried beneath trees, underbrush and jungle grass. Since the only other translation of this report—

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in a French historical bulletin of almost fifty years ago—is inaccessible to most Americanl readers, they will welcome the inclusion of the principal part of this unique source material.

MAX FISCHER.

Paths to the Present. Arthur M. Schlesinger. Macmillan. $4.00.

THE HARVARD professor who wrote this book evidently hopes that Americans are willing to read interesting historical essays. In an effort to find out he has presented thirteen such essays in *Paths to the Present.* They follow no strict chronological order and have such titles as "The Rôle of the Immigrant," "A Yardstick for Presidents," "America's Stake in One World," and "The City in American Civilization." Some readers will recall that the author contributed *The Rise of the City* to the series of volumes published under the title "History of American Life," a series edited by Professor Schlesinger and the late Dixon Ryan Fox. The chapter in the book being reviewed is substantially a distillation of that earlier book, and some will consider it the best section of this latest volume.

Some readers, however, will consider other chapters the most interesting, because of unusual but tenable points of view presented. The second one, for example, entitled "Biography of a Nation of Joiners" has as its opening sentence: "At first thought it seems paradoxical that a people noted for individualism should also be the world's greatest example of joiners." Included in the chapter are discussions of the influence of Freemasonry and of the Alliances; we are informed further that such a group as the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union has aggregate resources of about $47,000,000; we learn that in 1942 "a total of 628 organizations maintained offices in Washington to supply arguments and witnesses for or against various types of legislation." Excellent summarizations are made of the arguments for and against restricted immigration. The opposition of Ralph Waldo Emerson and of Samuel F. B. Morse to Catholic immigrants is noted, but there is no evidence that Professor Schlesinger was favorably impressed by it.

An annotated bibliography is added for those who wish to explore further into our national story.

PAUL KINIERY.

Contemporary Painters. James Thrall Soby. Museum of Modern Art. $3.75.
Drawings of Degas. Jean Leymaire.
Lithographs of Toulouse-Lautrec. Claude Roger-Marx.
Continental Book Centre. $2.50 ea.
Cézanne. Andre Leclerc.
Rembrandt. Henri Dumont.
Botticelli. Andre Leclerc. Hyperion Press. .59 ea.

EVER SINCE certain disaffected critics began hurling their spitballs at modern art, the public has awaited a book to dissipate these attacks. James Thrall Soby, who conducts an art column for one of the literary periodicals, who serves in official capacities for the Museum of Modern Art (and edits certain of their catalogs) and whose previous books have suggested the tone if not the temper for such an effort, certainly possesses some of the ammunition required for an effective counter-charge. Unfortunately, he fails to array his forces

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properly and thus leaves another gap through which the chirping enemies may pour.

Indeed, preferring the rôle of gentleman-critic, Mr. Soby altogether shuns the battle. He would rather, he says, undertake fresh studies of neglected movements, attempt unfamiliar juxtapositions, and send up signal flares for young and unknown artists. Accordingly, he sifts out the finest grains of three American watercolorists, Charles Demuth, John Marin and Charles Burchfield; pits the restless Max Weber against the static Edward Hopper; brackets Ben Shahn, the memorializer of Sacco and Vanzetti, with Morris Graves, the Pacific Coast student of moonlight, and devotes separate chapters to Peter Blume and Loren MacIver, both Americans, and to Matta Echaurren, a Cuban stratospherist. Again, he salutes Max Beckmann, the tramping German, discusses Rouault and Soutine as exponents of tragedy, handles Klee, Miro and Calder as humorists, estimates a bevy of emerging Americans, revaluates earlier cults like Futurism and Vorticism, and concludes with a long parade of the contemporary English. In short, as if conducting a tourist through a show at the Museum of Modern Art, he firsts points out some of the more established artists, then, moving into a later period of work, he communicates his pleasure in some of the less tested personalities. This inspection finished, he next ushers the visitor into the museum library, where he discusses the meaning of certain past tendencies. Thereupon he courteously terminates the interview and the visitor is left to himself.

Well-intentioned though the cicerone may be, he manages to convey two contradictory impressions by this tour among the contemporaries. The first is a glimmer of quicksilver delight from the contact with his remarks on Demuth. It would be hard to improve on his characterization of these fastidious watercolors as being in the "special idiom of the murmured aside" and as showing the "exact weight of fragility." Demuth has never been better understood—which suggests nothing short of a watchwork delicacy in the mind of the commentator. Sometimes this impression is renewed by a further insight, as in references to Klee and Graves, but for the rest these flickers too often are obscured. Dominating them is a ponderous, queasy lack of definition, as if all issues were stuck fast in a field of marshmallow. Evidently Mr. Soby, who would be a man of taste, cannot persistently exercise that exquisite discrimination he showed for Demuth, and thus gets lost amid the hosts of the novelties from here and abroad. If he would but adhere to his gossamer strands, he might well escape the bog of his perplexities.

*

As for the Degas and Lautrec, these are small handbooks, abundantly illustrated and in a good format, suited, with their thumbnail critiques, to the eager, just discovering these caustic masters. The Cezanne, Rembrandt and Botticelli capture less edge in their reproductions and the critical remarks are more elementary—though again rewarding to a beginner. Even so, these commentators have undertaken a less exacting journey than James Thrall Soby, who is trying, and meritoriously, to steer where few ways have yet been charted.

JEROME MELLQUIST.

Separation of Church and State in the United States. Alvin Johnson and Frank Yost. University of Minnesota Press. Minneapolis. $4.50.
Historical Records and Studies: Vol. XXXVII. United States Catholic Historical Society.

THE QUESTION of the relation of Church and State in the United States is not a religious question, as one scholar, Professor J. M. O'Neill, has pointed out, but it is a question of civil liberties and constitutional law. Also of historical precedent, though in such a controversial issue great care must be taken that historical utterances are not considered solely as verbal ammunition, torn from context, to prove that *X* meant what I said.

Drs. Alvin Johnson and Frank Yost have issued a revised and enlarged edition of Dr. Alvin Johnson's *The Legal Status of Church-State Relationships in the United States,* published in 1934. Chapters have been added on a number of subjects that have become prominent, and often controversial, issues: citizenship and the bearing of arms, freedom of speech for Communists, and the McCollum Case and its consequences.

Messrs. Johnson and Yost, in their second paragraph, set the confused tone of their book. "The separation of church and state has become one of the fundamental principles of government in the United States." Actually, only a government can "establish" a church, in the sense of "espousing" it. And the fundamental principle of government here referred to by Drs. Yost and Johnson was that *no* church should be established. A separation can only occur after an establishment: the great American principle is not that the separation should occur, but that the establishment should not.

The early Americans, most of whom came from England, were fleeing from the intolerance of "establishment." Although the American Revolution dis-established the Anglican (Episcopalian) Church, as Messrs. Johnson and Yost show, the required reading of the Protestant Bible today in some states, and its tolerance in many others, is a proof that the dis-establishment is not yet complete.

Messrs. Johnson and Yost, in their summaries of each question under discussion—released time, public aid to sectarian schools, allowing credit for religious instruction, religious garb in public schools, free textbooks for private schools, free transportation to private schools—take upon themselves a judicial rôle. Thus, they conclude that when teachers in the public school, paid from the tax funds furnished by people of all faiths or no faith, appear in a religious garb, the public school becomes a place for "the flaunting of a unique act of religion." Following this through, it would seem that the public school teacher must be of no faith, since the wearing of a star of David, a scapular, or a bare silver or gold cross adopted by some Protestants, would also constitute flaunting? All's fair in love and war, and from objecting to nuns' habits it's no far step to objecting to teachers having ashes on their foreheads on the first day of Lent! Both are a very long way from Jefferson's approval of the furnishing of tax money to support a Catholic priest among the Catholic Indians, and to the building of a Catholic church, in 1803.

Messrs. Johnson and Yost prove, very conclusively, that Church and State are far from completely separated. Church and State meet, on the whole most amicably, at a variety of points, and are inextricably linked at a number of others.

The *Historical Records and Studies, Volume XXXVII,* proves that, while there is no establishment now, the present dis-establishment has grown out of a considerable

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EUROPE UNITES, by Lily Doblhoff: the present status of the movement for a United Europe as reflected in its recent conference at Brussels, and in the spadework which had immediately preceded it. Another meaningful interpretation by an able, firsthand witness.

ENGLISH PROSPECT, by Diana Forbes-Robertson, is a leading feature of the special Travel Section in this April 1 issue. It tells about British living conditions at the moment, the state of the theater, and the music and drama festivals which are expected to attract so many visitors to England this summer.

TRAVEL, 1949, by Ernestine Evans, who is serving as general editor of this special section, will touch upon a variety of things, poetical and practical.

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struggle with dominant sects. And that federal, as well as state monies, have always been, and are today, paid to chaplains of three denominations in the armed services, as to teachers of various denominations under various circumstances. In conclusion, it may be observed that He who said "Render unto Caesar," was far more cautious in defining which things *are* Caesar's than many who call themselves by His name today. ANNE FREMANTLE.

Charles Du Bos and English Literature. Angelo Bertocci. King's Crown Press. $3.75.

SPENGLER might well have cited the output of modern scholarship as evidence for his theory that Western Civilization has passed from its creative to its analytical stage. A current example is Professor Bertocci's analysis of the writings of the French critic, Charles Du Bos. This interpretation of criticism is, as the author expresses it, an attempt to approximate Du Bos's *Approximations.*

The justification for such a work may be found in the fact that Charles Du Bos was a creative critic. Professor Bertocci considers the development of Du Bos's theories of art, influenced by certain pieces of literature, more significant than his comments concerning particular works. Charles Du Bos discovered in English literature principles of art and existence which he adopted and further developed. Du Bos, eventually a convert to Catholicism, begins by accepting Keats's "Beauty is Truth" and goes on to define Truth as God. Shakespeare's love of mankind becomes consecrated when Du Bos lifts it to the higher level of love of God. Professor Bertocci feels that Du Bos is of interest, therefore, not only for his final synthesis of art and Christianity, but also because of the fact that his faith was attained through art. "One could conceive of a quip to the effect that Pater, Shelley, Keats and Shakespeare saved Du Bos, but themselves they could not save."

Professor Bertocci avoids generalizations concerning Du Bos's attitude toward English literature, noting merely that he considered English writers more spiritual than the French. Browning, Shelley, Keats, Shakespeare, Henry James, George Eliot, Hardy and Murry, the figures with whom this book is concerned, represent no trend in English literature. They are the writers who, for widely varying reasons, were admired by Du Bos, and the author makes no attempt to find any other unifying principle.

The chapters on individual writers are of much more general interest than the section on Du Bos's aesthetic theory. Professor Bertocci's failure to simplify the intricacies of Du Bos's position on this subject may discourage many.

Readers possessing the necessary background in aesthetics and literature will find a careful study of this work well worth the effort. Weighted down though it is with the apparatus of scholarship, this analysis reaches the essence of Du Bos's criticism, the belief that great literature is significant not as an end in itself but as the introduction to a more complete spiritual experience.

CATHERINE ANN CLINE.

Citizen Thomas More and His Utopia. Russell Ames. Princeton. $3.50.

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